Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 149967
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 /029 R

DRAFTED BY AF/S:DKEOGH:SBA
APPROVED BY AF/S:DKPETTERSON
----------112179 281818Z /44
R 281456Z JUN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS STATE 149967

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:SF, PGOV

SUBJECT:JOHN BURNS' NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE JUNE 26

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF JOHN BURNS' ARTICLE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES OF JUNE 26, ENTITLED: "SOUTH AFRICA'S SECRET BUT POWERFUL BROTHERHOOD."

2. "ON THE SURFACE, THERE IS LITTLE ABOUT GERRIT VAN NIEKERK VILJOEN TO SUGGEST AN INFLUENCE REACHING TO THE FURTHEST CORNERS OF SOUTH AFRICA. HE IS THE MILD-MANNERED WHITE-HAIRED RECTOR OF THE RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY, WHOSE SPACIOUS CAMPUS, DOMINATED BY FUTURISTIC CONCRETE BUILDINGS, OCCUPIES WHAT USED TO BE A GOLF COURSE IN THE INNER SUBURBS OF THIS CITY. IN HIS UNIVERSITY POST, THE FORMER CLASSICS PROFESSOR IS ONE OF THE LEADING EDUCATORS IN THE COUNTRY. BUT HIS REAL IMPORTANCE COMES FROM THE FACT THAT HE IS CHAIRMAN OF THE BROEDERBOND, OR BROTHERHOOD, THE SECRET SOCIETY THAT IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL INSTITUTION IN AFRIKANERDOM.

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SPHERE OF AFRIKANER LIFE: POLITICS, PUBLIC SERVICE, BUSINESS, EDUCATION, TRADE UNIONS, CHURCHES AND NEWSPAPERS. OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, 19 OF 24 CABINET MINISTERS ARE SAID TO BE BROERS, OR BROTHERS. PRIME MINISTER JOHN B. VORSTER IS ONE.

4. "LIKE AFRIKANERS GENERALLY, MEMBERS OF THE BROEDERBOND HAVE REACTED IN DIFFERENT WAYS TO THE UPHEAVAL IN THE BLACK TOWNSHIP OF SOWETO, OUTSIDE JOHANNESBURG. SOME, LIKE ANDRIES TREURNICHT, MR. VILJOEN'S PREDECESSOR AS CHAIRMAN, HAVE HELD FAST TO THE CLASSIC TENETS OF APARTHEID, WARNING THAT CONCESSIONS WILL BRING QTE THE POLITICAL DESTRUCTION OF THE WHITE MAN. UNQTE. OTHERS, LED BY MR. VILJOEN, HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THE NEED FOR CHANGE. INEVITABLY, THE DIFFERENCES HAVE WEAKENED THE SOCIETY'S POLITICAL INFLUENCE, WHICH WAS ONCE DETERMINANT. THAT THE CASE FOR REFORM IS BEING AIRED AT ALL, MUCH LESS BY THE MAN AT THE HELM, IS A MEASURE OF THE GROWING FAVOR OF IDEAS THAT WERE HERETICAL IN BROEDERBOND CIRCLES ONLY A YEAR AGO.

5. "MR. VILJOEN SPEAKS FOR THE RECORD ONLY AS THE UNIVERSITY RECTOR, BUT THERE IS LITTLE RESERVE IN WHAT HE SAYS. MOST STARTLING IS HIS INSISTENCE ON MORE VIGOROUS LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL PARTY, THE POLITICAL REPOSITORY OF AFRIKANER NATIONALISM, WHICH OWED ITS RISE TO POWER 29
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8. "TO MOST BLACKS, SUCH REFORMS SEEM MODEST, IF NOT TRIVIAL. BUT FROM A BROEDERBOND MAN, THEY ARE A GIANT LEAP. FROM ITS INCEPTION IN 1918, THE SOCIETY ASSUMED THE SUBORDINATION OF THE BLACK MAN, CONCENTRATING INSTEAD
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ON THE TASK OF SUBORDINATING THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WHITES WHO HAD TAKEN A CONTROLLING ROLE IN THE NATION'S POLITICS AFTER THE BOER WAR: THE SOCIETY'S CO-FOUNDER, ANOTHER UNIVERSITY RECTOR, MADE THE OBJECTIVE UNMISTAKEABLE IN ONE OF HIS EARLY DIRECTIVES. QTE BROTHERS, UNQTE, HE WROTE, QTE OUR SOLUTION TO SOUTH AFRICA'S PROBLEMS IS THAT THE BROEDERBOND MUST RULE. UNQTE.

9. "OPERATING CLANDESTINELY, AND RECRUITING ONLY AFRIKANERS, THE SOCIETY BUILT UP A NETWORK OF MEMBERS. BY 1935, GENERAL HERTZOG WAS WARNING THAT ITS POWER WAS SUFFICIENT TO RIVAL THAT OF THE STATE. BY 1948, WITH THE VICTORY OF AFRIKANER NATIONALISM AT THE POLLS, IT EFFECTIVELY WAS THE STATE. THEREAFTER, IT CONCENTRATED ON POLICING THE GOVERNMENT, SETTING UP A RANGE OF QTE TASK FORCES UNQTE, OR WATCHDOG COMMITTEES, WHICH MONITORED EVERYTHING FROM ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF QTE NONWHITE AFFAIRS. UNQTE.

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APPROVED BY: AF/S: DKEOGH
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL DURBAN IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 149967

FOL TEL SENT ACTION PRETORIA CAPE TOWN FROM SECSTATE DTD 28 JUN 1977 QTE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1993325
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JOHN BURNS\' NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE JUNE 26
TAGS: PGOV, SOPN, SF, (VILJOEN, GERRIT VAN NIEKERK)
To: PRETORIA CAPE TOWN
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/45038072-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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